



Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

8541st meeting

Monday, 10 June 2019, 10.30 a.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait)

Members:

Belgium	Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve
China	Mr. Wu Haitao
Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Adom
Dominican Republic	Mr. Singer Weisinger
Equatorial Guinea	Mrs. Mele Colifa
France	Mrs. Gueguen
Germany	Mr. Schulz
Indonesia	Mr. Djani
Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
Poland	Ms. Wronecka
Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
South Africa	Mr. Matjila
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hickey
United States of America	Mr. Cohen

Agenda

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2019/461)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2019/461)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Serbia to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Zahir Tanin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo; and Mr. João Miguel Ferreira de Serpa Soares, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel.

Mr. Tanin is participating in the meeting via video-teleconference from Pristina.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Vlora Çitaku to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2019/461, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo.

I now give the floor to Mr. Tanin.

Mr. Tanin: As reflected in the details of the report before the Security Council (S/2019/461), the situation in Kosovo, and between Belgrade and Pristina, is again at a fragile moment. Today's meeting coincides with a significant anniversary. It has been 20 years since the Security Council last adopted a full resolution in response to the conflict (resolution 1244 (1999)). Over those 20 years, there has clearly been progress and

change in a myriad of dimensions, in Kosovo, in the region and in the world.

At the same time, we should make an additional reflection. In the absence of a genuine and necessary process of engagement between the parties to this conflict, the situation does not simply remain tenuous, but could slide backwards. Often it has done so. Productive engagements between Belgrade and Pristina have not taken place since autumn 2018, and, while much attention is focused upon day-to-day disputes and provocations, these are not the only factors complicating efforts to return to negotiations.

The imposition of a 100 per cent import tariff on Serbian and Bosnian goods by Pristina last November continues, despite a near-unanimous call by the international community for its removal. Belgrade's position is that lifting the import tariffs is a minimum condition for resuming talks within the format facilitated by the European Union. Pristina leaders have also set out public conditions, though not always with unity of voice, and while a Pristina negotiating team has been created, its full responsibilities await clarification. To resolutioneduce these complex nuances into a single assessment: multiple inconsistent public signals have hampered all efforts to ensure the full engagement of both parties in a single or definitive process.

In such circumstances, leaders from all sides must exercise their responsibility to steer this complex situation clear of any serious escalations. Engagement in good faith, without threats or ultimatums, is necessary for re-establishing the conditions for the resumption and continuation of political dialogue. I hope that all parties engaged may be able to work collectively to ensure that the planned meeting in July in Paris is used by the parties to return to substantive matters, in particular those that directly affect the lives of people and communities. Engaging more actively with a wider array of stakeholders, demonstrating a commitment to advancing the interests of populations hoping for better opportunities, and meaningful and equal participation of all segments of the society are elements essential to achieving a measure of political process, but unfortunately each appeared to be lacking in the efforts we observed during this past period.

One of the significant developments since the end of the official reporting period was the organization of elections in the four Kosovo Serb-majority municipalities in northern Kosovo. Following the

resignations of the mayors of these municipalities in response to Pristina's increase of the import tax on Serbian and Bosnian goods, the President of Kosovo called an extraordinary election, which took place on 19 May. The election proceeded peacefully. According to Kosovo's Central Election Commission, the elections resulted in a clear victory for the Serbian List candidates who already held power in the relevant municipalities, and who received above 90 per cent of the vote. Restricted electoral competition and limited political participation in Kosovo Serb communities were issues underlined by some of the diplomatic representatives monitoring the election process.

On the morning of 28 May, the Kosovo police conducted a special operation — concentrated mainly in the northern municipalities — targeting smuggling and organized crime suspects, under warrants issued by the Pristina Basic Court. The operation led to the arrest of a number of suspects, including local officials. Suspects and Kosovo police officers were injured in the course of the operation. During this operation, two staff members of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), based in Zubin Potok, a municipality in the north, one international and one locally recruited, were arrested and injured, in separate incidents. It is a United Nations responsibility to determine objectively the circumstances affecting its staff, which we have already undertaken in a systematic manner, in full accord with United Nations practice and with the imperative to determine the facts expeditiously. This point is particularly important for Council members to know, given the extent of unverified information and speculation that have since appeared in the public domain.

Today, I would like to put on record just a few other pertinent points.

First, there has been a failure to observe our staff members' relevant immunities to arrest and detention. United Nations property was also improperly searched and seized, in contravention of all relevant laws and the Organization's immunities.

Secondly, despite our requests and a normally productive working relationship with authorities in Pristina, the situation at present is that the authorities have shared very little relevant or factual evidence with the United Nations about the arrest and injury of our staff. Simultaneously, Kosovo authorities have issued statements in the press, and in correspondence

directed to States Members of the United Nations, that contains information lacking an adequate evidentiary basis, contrary to much of our understanding so far, and avoids matters essential for an objective enquiry.

Thirdly, the day after the transfer of our international staff member outside Kosovo to receive required medical treatment, he was publicly declared *persona non grata*, upon which occasion I received in parallel a communication from Pristina authorities stating the same. As already stressed, the doctrine of *persona non grata* does not apply to, or in respect of, United Nations personnel.

Fourthly, I am alarmed that both staff members were apparently subjected to excessive force and mistreatment upon their arrest by police, causing injuries requiring hospitalization. That is a matter that will form an essential component of the enquiry that we have initiated.

During those events, I was obliged to call repeatedly for the immediate release of United Nations staff, as well as respect for their rights and immunities. That would not have been necessary had the authorities respected the immunity of UNMIK personnel and communicated with the Mission in a more forthright and timely manner. Nonetheless, we remain hopeful that communication from the highest levels of Pristina authorities will improve as we work to clarify the precise circumstances of 28 May.

I also wish to make clear that our Mission stands fully behind all efforts of the Pristina institutions to combat organized crime networks and eliminate public corruption. That struggle, as I emphasized in my public statement on 28 May, must also sit within the framework of the international rule of law and human rights principles, which are guarded by the United Nations, and foremost by this Council.

Regardless of events such as the ones on 28 May, UNMIK continues to focus its efforts and resources on the objectives of peace and stability in Kosovo and the region. We will do so effectively only with the direct support of the Council.

Internally, I consistently review our Mission's priorities and will need the Council's support to ensure that we continue to fulfil our role in the most efficient and appropriate way. Our approach is guided by the Secretary-General's prevention agenda, epitomized by the Mission's focus on trust-building among

communities. In that, we work closely with all actors who are engaged in good-faith efforts to transform the environment from one of contained conflict into one of peace and progress.

In collaboration with the United Nations Kosovo team, and our other international partners on the ground, we continue to empower trust-building actors, including in the areas of language rights and human rights more broadly, youth empowerment, gender equality, justice and intercommunal dialogue. We have followed a road map created during the United Nations Kosovo Trust-Building Forum, held in May 2018, utilizing public spaces in Kosovo to underline the priority of reconciliation expressed by Kosovo's leadership. The debates that we are fostering are designed specifically to tackle the most sensitive areas of public concern, including the political decision-making process, religious tolerance, empowering the younger generation in the daunting challenge of overcoming the past and ensuring a more just and peaceful future for the next generation.

We are pursuing our goal of being directly engaged with Kosovo institutions to help the implementation of human rights initiatives and legislation. Although largely drowned out by the news stories of the same time frame, on 24 May, the Working Group on Missing Persons met in Pristina, agreeing on several very practical steps jointly to uncover further information needed to address still-unresolved cases. The same Group will soon submit a report documenting the actions since 2004, during which identifications in over 3,300 cases were accomplished.

We consistently seek innovative avenues to promote trust, together with all our partners. We hope that the institutions from both sides will continue to join us in that effort. The third United Nations Youth Assembly, co-organized by UNMIK and UNICEF, with the vital participation of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, produced specific recommendations for young people from across Kosovo to engage their Government and non-governmental institutions. The Global Open Day on Women, Peace and Security in Pristina, in collaboration with the European Union (EU), highlighted the need for the greater inclusion and engagement of women, including in the highest political processes.

I would also like to take the opportunity to welcome the initial contribution to the trust fund

established to support the Ashkali, Egyptian and Roma communities. The Secretary-General has urged additional contributions, which are essential to respond adequately to the needs of those vulnerable groups.

UNMIK will continue to work closely with our international partners, particularly the EU and the Kosovo Force, as well as with the many bilateral actors who are investing their resources in Kosovo's stability, community reconciliation and economic development. Our international partners have invested substantial resources in Kosovo and the region, and the parties have expressed their desire to move ever closer to the European Union. I therefore call upon the parties to do their part and assume responsibilities for delivering on the objectives of normalizing relations and helping to bring not only a more lasting stability but growing prosperity to the region.

In closing, on behalf of all UNMIK staff, I wish to thank the Council for its support and reiterate our assurance that we will continue to implement the peace and security mandate with which it has entrusted us.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Tanin for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. De Serpa Soares.

Mr. De Serpa Soares: I would like to begin my briefing by providing a short outline of the legal regime of immunity for United Nations staff members in Kosovo, since that is an important element for the appreciation of the overall response to the events of 28 May and their follow-up.

The regime of immunity applicable to the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and its personnel in Kosovo is spelled out in UNMIK Regulation No. 2000/47 of 18 August 2000, on the status, privileges and immunities of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and UNMIK and their personnel in Kosovo. The pertinent provisions are sections 3.3 and 3.4, as read with section 5.

Pursuant to section 3.3 of UNMIK Regulation 2000/47, UNMIK personnel, including locally recruited personnel, shall be immune from legal process in respect of words spoken and all acts performed by them in their official capacity in Kosovo. That is what is often termed functional immunity. Pursuant to section 5 of the same UNMIK regulation, that specific immunity continues after the expiration of the Mission's mandate or after the personnel are no longer employed by UNMIK.

Section 3.4 of UNMIK Regulation No. 2000/47 further provides that UNMIK personnel shall be immune from any form of arrest or detention, and that, if they are erroneously detained, they shall be immediately turned over to UNMIK authorities.

Allow me to highlight that the immunity from legal process enjoyed by UNMIK personnel in Kosovo is held in the interests of UNMIK and not for the benefit of the individuals themselves. Importantly, it is the Secretary-General who has the right, and the duty, to waive the immunity of UNMIK personnel in any case where, in his opinion, the immunity would impede the course of justice and can be waived without prejudice to the interests of UNMIK. That is all clearly stated in section 6.1 of UNMIK Regulation No. 2000/47.

As will readily be appreciated, in order for the immunity and the procedure that I have just outlined to be effective, the local authorities, before they take any legal action against UNMIK personnel, should first inform the Secretary-General — in this case, his Special Representative, Mr. Tanin — of the facts and circumstances of the acts of the personnel concerned and do so with a degree of specificity sufficient for a determination to be made on the applicability of immunity to those acts. Mr. Tanin would then inform the authorities whether immunity applied and, if it did not, the legal action against the UNMIK personnel could go ahead.

Resolution 1244 (1999), pursuant to which UNMIK was established, remains in force and the legal framework established by UNMIK pursuant to the powers assigned to it under resolution 1244 (1999) continues to apply, albeit under very different circumstances today. That includes UNMIK Regulation No. 2000/47 on the Status, Privileges and Immunities of KFOR and UNMIK and their Personnel in Kosovo.

Following the adoption of the declaration of independence by the Assembly of Kosovo on 17 February 2008, the Secretary-General reported to the Security Council on that development and stated that

“pending guidance from the Council, the United Nations would continue to operate on the understanding that resolution 1244 (1999) remained in force and that UNMIK would continue to implement its mandate in the light of the evolving circumstances” (*S/2008/354, para. 4*).

Since that development, the Secretary-General has maintained a position of status neutrality. That refers to the continued operation of UNMIK in the light of the prevailing circumstances and to the constructive engagement with the Kosovo authorities in a manner that does not imply recognition of any statehood. That approach continues to be followed.

As Special Representative of the Secretary-General Tanin has noted, two UNMIK staff members were arrested and detained on 28 May during a police operation in northern Kosovo. They were later released from detention. The internationally recruited staff member Mr. Mikhail Krasnoshchekov, who is the team leader of the UNMIK office in Zubin Potok and a Russian national, was released on 28 May. Mr. Dejan Dimovic, a Kosovo Serb and a Programme Assistant in the UNMIK office in Zubin Potok, was released on 29 May. The arrest and detention of Mr. Krasnoshchekov and Mr. Dimovic were not consistent with their privileges and immunities as UNMIK personnel, as set forth in UNMIK Regulation No. 2000/47.

It is our understanding from the facts, as we know them so far, that both Mr. Krasnoshchekov and Mr. Dimovic were on official assignment to monitor the police operations in northern Kosovo at the time of their arrest. As Mr. Tanin noted — and I must say that we share his alarm, it is of serious concern that both staff members were apparently beaten and mistreated upon their arrest. Both required medical attention upon their release. Mr. Krasnoshchekov was transferred to a hospital in Belgrade on 30 May, where he remains admitted. Mr. Dimovic, for his part, was hospitalized in Kosovo on 30 May and released from hospital on 3 June.

As is required in all such incidents, the United Nations Department of Safety and Security undertook an internal investigation to gather all available information regarding the circumstances surrounding the arrest and detention of Mr. Krasnoshchekov and Mr. Dimovic and to look into the allegations by the Kosovo authorities regarding their conduct. It is our understanding that both staff members still face the possibility of criminal legal process in Kosovo. Regarding Mr. Krasnoshchekov, UNMIK is in receipt of a request from the Chief Prosecutor in the municipality of Mitrovica for a waiver of immunity which, although the name is not correctly stated in the document, we believe concerns him. The request is made in respect of charges of co-perpetration in “obstructing official persons in performing official

duties” and in “participating in a crowd committing a criminal offence and hooliganism”. That request is being looked at by my Office.

As for Mr. Dimovic, UNMIK has not received a request for a waiver of his immunity. What we know is that he was arraigned on charges of “obstructing official persons in performing official duties” and that he appeared with five co-accused before the Basic Court of Mitrovica, Zubin Potok branch, on 29 May. The hearing was to consider a request from the Prosecutor for his continued detention, as well as for the detention of the five other persons arraigned with him. UNMIK has obtained and forwarded to United Nations Headquarters a summary translation of those proceedings. On the basis of that document, we understand that Mr. Dimovic’s release, and that of his five co-arraigned, on 29 May was decided on the basis of a lack of sufficient evidence to confirm a reasonable suspicion of the alleged criminal offence. Mr. Dimovic was represented by private counsel in the hearing and accompanied by an UNMIK staff member. As we understand it, the decision to release the co-accused is still subject to an appeal by the Prosecution. The appeal is scheduled to be heard during the week of 10 June.

The results of a thorough internal United Nations investigation will help to establish a better understanding of the relevant facts, which will aid the Organization in considering the next steps, including under UNMIK Regulation No. 2000/47 on the Status, Privileges and Immunities of KFOR and UNMIK and their Personnel in Kosovo.

Before I conclude, I would recall that Special Representative of the Secretary-General Tanin has noted UNMIK’s receipt of a formal notification on 31 May, declaring Mr. Krasnoshchekov persona non grata in Kosovo. As Special Representative of the Secretary-General Tanin noted in a very clear statement to the Kosovo authorities, and as the Deputy Spokesperson also noted at his noon briefing of 3 June, the doctrine of persona non grata is not applicable to United Nations personnel and is not contemplated under UNMIK Regulation No. 2000/47. Any concerns regarding a member of UNMIK personnel should be addressed to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Tanin so that UNMIK can address the matter in line with its status, privileges and immunities. In that regard, I wish to emphasize that allegations of misconduct by United Nations personnel throughout the Organization are

taken very seriously by the Organization and prompt action is taken where it is warranted.

The fullest measure of cooperation by the Kosovo authorities will continue to be required to facilitate the United Nations investigation so as to allow the Secretary-General to determine the next steps under the legal framework that I have outlined.

I would like to thank the Council and its members for the opportunity to provide this briefing.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. De Serpa Soares for his briefing.

I would like to draw the attention of speakers to paragraph 22 of presidential note 507 (S/2017/507), which encourages all participants in Council meetings to deliver their statements in five minutes or less, in line with the Security Council’s commitment to making more effective use of open meetings.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia.

Mr. Dačić (Serbia) (*spoke in Serbian; interpretation provided by the delegation*): I thank Secretary-General Guterres and Special Representative Tanin for their efforts in implementing the mandate of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) under resolution 1244 (1999).

For almost two years now we have been arguing in the Security Council about whether we should be meeting two, three or four times a year. All this time, however, the situation in Kosovo and Metohija has been going from bad to worse. Unfortunately, it is clear from the current situation that the decision to reduce the number of meetings was premature. However, I do believe that we are now done with the procedural issues and can begin to address the core issues and ensure that our meetings are productive. Despite the claims of some that our deliberations are often antagonistic and unconstructive, the Council’s consideration of the situation in Kosovo and Metohija represents a vital opportunity for providing the Security Council and the international community with regular and transparent advice on the situation on the ground and the key political and security challenges that we face in Kosovo, however difficult they may be and despite the fact that it is evident that our positions differ.

At the outset, I want to reiterate my call for a dialogue and for a solution to the decades-long problem of Kosovo and Metohija through peaceful means and compromise. I hope that the entire Council subscribes to that and is willing to state loudly and clearly what is required for a successful dialogue. What we need are two countries that behave reasonably and sensibly and that are ready to talk and then to implement what they agree on. In the European Union-facilitated negotiations in Brussels, one of the parties to the dialogue has done so since the very beginning. The other, regrettably, has not.

Last week we heard from Pristina that it was not planning to implement any part of what was agreed to six years ago, including the establishment of a community of Serb municipalities. That statement by Hashim Thaçi makes us wonder what we have been doing all this time. Because if an agreement is reached, signed and guaranteed, including by the European Union, but goes unimplemented by Pristina for six years and is eventually rejected outright, we have to ask if there was ever a dialogue at all. It was not just Serbia that was deceived. The entire international community encouraged us to continue the dialogue. We were asked to be patient in the face of Pristina's constant prevarications about implementing any agreement. This also represents a serious dent in the credibility of the European Union, which is a signatory to the Brussels Agreement and thereby a guarantor of its implementation.

Let me once again remind the Council that in August 2013, as the then Prime Minister of Serbia, together with Hashim Thaçi and Catherine Ashton, I signed the First Agreement on Principles Governing the Normalization of Relations between Belgrade and Pristina, known as the Brussels Agreement. The negotiations that preceded the signing were very difficult for Serbia, but as a responsible partner, my country has implemented all the obligations it assumed. We signed the Agreement only because it guaranteed the establishment of a community of Serb municipalities.

However, the representatives of Pristina, without mincing their words, have said that they are not going to implement what was agreed to. Dissatisfied with their treatment, they threatened the European Union that they would consider unification with Albania and annex three other municipalities in southern Serbia to boot. Can Pristina be considered a serious and responsible party with which we should continue to negotiate? Who

can convince us now that it will not behave in the same way in this process in the future? We have also heard a litany of threatening messages from Albania's Prime Minister Edi Rama on the possibility of the unification of Albania and Kosovo. Yet those messages are being dismissed without a response and glossed over as trivial.

Two weeks ago, a so-called anti-corruption and anti-organized crime operation was carried out in northern Kosovo and Metohija. Kosovo's special police Regional Operations Support Unit arrested more than 30 people. Serbia supports the fight against organized crime throughout its territory, but the use of long guns and excessive force, along with the televised spectacle that followed, were indicative of a different goal altogether — intimidating the remaining Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija. More than 70 combat vehicles were deployed and Serbs were brutally beaten, while Albanians were apprehended without any forceful measures. If that unacceptable act is not widely condemned, including by the Council, it will have served its purpose, and the Serbian population of Kosovo and Metohija will continue to be intimidated and terrorized.

Following the signing of the Brussels Agreement, I attended a meeting with Catherine Ashton, Hashim Thaçi and Aleksandar Vučić at NATO's headquarters in Brussels. It was agreed at the meeting that no Kosovo security force would enter the North without first complying with two conditions — notifying the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and advising the representatives of the Serb communities in northern Kosovo and Metohija, neither of which condition was met on this occasion. On top of that, two United Nations personnel were brutalized and arrested, although they did not attempt to resist and were not armed. I spoke about it with Special Representative Tanin, who informed me officially that they were in fact there on duty. Mikhail Krasnoshchekov was beaten, unlawfully arrested and subsequently declared persona non grata, contrary to the relevant United Nations convention. Not even members of the United Nations Mission are safe in Kosovo. How can we expect the Mission to carry out its mandate if its personnel can be attacked at will and declared undesirable if they do not happen to be to Pristina's liking? What will it be next — the expulsion of the entire Mission? And Pristina, which has no shame, is now offering to negotiate UNMIK's future presence in northern Kosovo with the Secretary-General. I would like to point out that it is the Council that decides on

the Mission's mandate and that it was established by resolution 1244 (1999).

The developments in Kosovo and Metohija over the past several weeks and months are telling evidence that the international community should be much more alert and invest much more effort, and that the international organizations in Kosovo and Metohija should be much more active. We have recently witnessed some Security Council members calling for a so-called strategic review of UNMIK's mandate and for its reduction and even withdrawal. At this point in time, however, it is difficult even to conceive of making any kind of change in direction, let alone taking action on it. Surely we all understand how far we are today from a stable and secure situation in Kosovo and Metohija that no longer warrants the Council's attention. The risk of the situation worsening on the ground could prove costly, and in the context of recent developments I am sure that no one wishes to run that risk. Unfortunately, the authorities in Pristina are turning a deaf ear to discussions of the matter. They think that they can reduce the Mission by beating up its members and expelling them.

On this very day, 20 years ago, the illegal bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the aggression by NATO, without any decision of the Council, came to an end. We are all aware of the negative effects that this precedent has had on international relations and on various events that have happened in the world over the past 20 years. However, I cannot let the occasion pass without mentioning the numerous civilian victims and their tragic fate, and how Serbia was ravaged in 78 days of bombardment with depleted uranium. I want to remember the 666 victims who died in Kosovo and Metohija after the war ended on 10 June 1999, and following the arrival of the United Nations Mission and KFOR. Of the 666 victims, 562 were Serbs, and 7,391 of the 8,134 attacks were against Serbs. Twenty years later, the only thing that we can say with certainty is that the primary victims of the conflict in Kosovo and Metohija and the bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were innocent civilians who were either killed or expelled, regardless of whether they were Serbs, Albanians or some other nationality. Despite the differences in positions on the issue, it cannot be denied that all sides committed crimes and that there were victims on all sides. Regrettably, we cannot bring back the victims, but we can learn from our mistakes and make sure that they are not repeated. It is therefore important to condemn all the crimes, mourn all the

victims, rule out war as a means of resolving conflict and embark on a path to compromise and a sustainable settlement while achieving lasting reconciliation and economic and political stability.

Twenty years ago to the day the Council adopted resolution 1244 (1999). I will try to describe the way in which its provisions dovetail with the facts on the ground, because the way they do that says a great deal about the validity and relevance of the resolution and UNMIK, as well as the task ahead of us. In crafting the mandate of the international presence in Kosovo and Metohija, in its tenth preambular paragraph the resolution reaffirms

“the commitment of all Member States to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the other States of the region, as set out in the Helsinki Final Act”.

However, many have taken a sledgehammer to that provision in order to conceal the fact that an ethnic minority — the Albanian minority, whose mother country is Albania — tried to secede from and take with it a part of the territory of a sovereign country.

In paragraph 5 of annex 2 of the resolution, among other things, the Security Council calls for the “[e]stablishment of an interim administration ... to ensure conditions for a peaceful and normal life for all inhabitants in Kosovo.” In paragraph 9 (c), it also calls for the establishment of “a secure environment in which refugees and displaced persons can return home in safety”. Efforts have been made in that regard and some refugees and displaced persons have indeed returned. But only 1.9 per cent of Serbs have returned for good, while 200,000 of them have remained away from home for 20 long years and it is not likely that they will go home any time soon. And we all know why. What can they expect if year after year they are met by organized attacks with sticks and stones even when they come to pay their respects to their dead on Christian holy days?

The catalogue of human rights violations in Kosovo and Metohija goes on and on, and we cannot list them all. It is not the subject of our deliberations today, but according to the United States Department of State, in its 2018 report on human rights in Kosovo,

“[s]ecurity incidents against Kosovo Serbs persisted ... In the first seven months of the year, there were more than 100 incidents involving thefts, break-ins, verbal harassment, and damage to the

property of Kosovo Serbs and the Serbian Orthodox Church ... Ethnic minorities ... faced varying levels of institutional and societal discrimination in employment, education, social services, language use, freedom of movement, the right to return to their homes (for displaced persons), and other basic rights.”

The brutal truth is that, after 20 years, multi-ethnic Kosovo and Metohija has become almost mono-ethnic. Let me once again bring some facts to the Council’s attention. Of the 427 towns and villages in which the Serbs lived prior to 1999, they now live in only 116. In other words, in the past 20 years, 311 settlements previously inhabited by Serbs have now been ethnically cleansed — that is, they are exclusively Albanian. What is that, if not ethnic cleansing? It is stark evidence of the falsehood of an alleged genocide against Albanians. After all, more Albanians live in Kosovo and Metohija today than did before 1999, while more than 200,000 Serbs have been expelled and 311 of their settlements have been ethnically cleansed. Those are the official figures from the Kosovo census. To cite just a couple more examples to illustrate my point, in 1999 there were more than 40,000 Serbs living in Pristina. Today there are fewer than 100. In 1999, there were more than 10,000 Serbs living in Prizren, the Serbian capital in Tsar Dušan’s reign in the fourteenth century — the town where I was born, incidentally — but today only 23 remain. Unfortunately, and very sadly for Serbs, those are the exact numbers.

Paragraphs 11 (i) and 14 of resolution 1244 (1999) call for “[m]aintaining civil law and order” and “[d]emand[s] full cooperation by all concerned ... with the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.” We truly believe that all who committed crimes should be brought to justice, and we have complied with our obligations. The results of the Tribunal, however, have left much to be desired. The full force of international justice was employed in the attempt to prosecute Serbs, and they paid the price, personally and politically, while the token few who were tried and sentenced on the other side were quickly released, and some of them are walking the corridors of power in Pristina today. In a recent statement, Philip Kosnett, the United States Ambassador in Pristina, expressed deep concern about the appointment of unqualified individuals to senior positions in the Kosovo Government, including people convicted of war crimes, under active indictment for serious crimes or suspected of serious abuses of power.

We continue to hope that justice is attainable. The Specialist Chambers and Office of the Specialist Prosecutor recently began their work and have a massive caseload. Among those under investigation, some are suspected of heinous crimes, including the abduction and killing of Serbs, as well as Albanians whom they considered disloyal, in order to harvest their organs. There is ample evidence of that in the Martyr report. We want to believe that they will be brought to justice despite the time that has passed, the destruction of evidence, the intimidation of witnesses and their families, and even the deplorable killings of protected witnesses.

Resolution 1244 (1999) states that the international military presence will provide security for all the inhabitants in Kosovo and Metohija. However, last December Pristina violated it once again by taking the unilateral decision to establish a Ministry of Defence and begin the process of transforming the Kosovo Security Force into the Kosovo Army, despite the admonitions of the United Nations, the European Union and NATO, in a dangerous manoeuvre that threatens security in Kosovo and beyond, and further aggravates the situation of Serbs and other non-Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija. Pristina has taken similar steps in the past, that some members of the international community regrettably have not adequately condemned. It seems to have created a perception in Pristina that it can take such unilateral actions with tacit approval in some quarters. That is exactly why these unilateral acts should be unequivocally condemned. KFOR must act preventively and deter any attempt by the Kosovo forces to threaten civil peace and security, which has the potential for destabilization.

From the platform of this leading organ of our world Organization, I want to warn the Council that, according to our information, the authorities in Pristina are planning an attack on northern Kosovo and Metohija. Everyone here should take note of that and put a stop to Pristina’s war machine before it causes more bloodshed. I also want to remind the Council that KFOR’s task is safeguarding the peace and security of all, including the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija. I want to ask the Council if it will or will not, because I am sure that it can. This is a very serious warning.

It is evident that because of Pristina’s failure to implement the resolution and outright violations of it, the continuation of UNMIK’s mandate is crucially important to the fate of many in Kosovo and Metohija.

Serbia believes firmly that the Mission must remain fully engaged on all issues relevant to the consistent implementation of its goals and objectives, with its scope undiminished and its mandate unchanged. Anything else would send a message to Serbs living in Kosovo and Metohija that they will not be able to stay in their ancestral land and to those who have been displaced that they are not welcome to return, a message that fits in with Pristina's intentions and goals. If that is permitted it would be tantamount to an admission by the international community, the United Nations and the Security Council that they are powerless and have no means to implement the decisions they made to maintain peace and create an environment conducive to a peaceful resolution of the conflict. We hope and believe that is not the case and that UNMIK will remain in Kosovo and Metohija in its full capacity.

Serbia has done everything possible to normalize the situation in Kosovo and Metohija, and we firmly believe that negotiations are the only way forward to address all outstanding issues. However, if we are the only ones to commit to dialogue or to a constructive approach to reaching a sustainable compromise solution to the question of Kosovo and Metohija, that is not enough to enable negotiations to continue at this time. As I said, we have no partner for a serious and responsible dialogue, and yet both sides, Belgrade and Pristina, are being called on to resume negotiations. The implication is that both are responsible for the impasse in negotiations even though the responsibility is Pristina's alone. How can we negotiate if rather than removing obstacles, the other side is doing everything it can to create new ones?

In November, in its frustration at not being made a member of INTERPOL and at 13 countries' revoking of their recognition of Kosovo's unilaterally declared independence, Pristina imposed 100 per cent tariffs on goods from central Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, a step unprecedented anywhere in the world. Six months later, and in the face of condemnation by almost all international actors and of calls to take back that senseless decision, Pristina is in no mood to do so. It is not only dismissive of those calls but is piling on provocations and unilateral acts that can only lead us to conclude that it is taking systematic steps to make dialogue impossible. How else are we to understand its adoption in March of its so-called platform for dialogue, which asserts that the only goal

and outcome of the dialogue is Serbia's recognition of Kosovo's independence?

With regard to the open protests from Pristina and some Security Council members about the 13 countries' revocation of their recognition of Kosovo, and their accusations that Serbia's activities are undermining dialogue, I would like to remind the Council that 23 countries have recognized Kosovo's unilaterally declared independence since the Brussels dialogue began, following intense lobbying by Pristina and pressure exerted by some Security Council members. In addition, Gent Cakaj, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of Albania, who was born in Kosovo and Metohija, said that Albania had set up a special team to lobby for additional recognitions and for Kosovo's membership in international organizations.

I have been participating in Council meetings for seven years now, and in that time, right in my face, some Council members have loudly urged all countries to recognize Kosovo and vote in favour of admitting it to INTERPOL, UNESCO and other international organizations. Why do they have the right to make those demands and we do not? And why does the issue upset Pristina, Tirana and certain Council members while Serbia's grievances meant nothing? Apparently the Council considered that normal. Pristina also goes around complaining that Serbia prevented its admission to INTERPOL, but the fact is that at the INTERPOL General Assembly in Dubai last year, only 75 of its 194 members voted in favour of Kosovo's admission. What happened to the 116 countries that Pristina claims have recognized it? Some Council members would have us believe that little Serbia is so powerful that it could influence the decision of many INTERPOL members.

The authorities in Pristina also recently adopted a resolution on Serbia's alleged genocide in Kosovo. Such measures are tantamount to playing games with international law. They increase tensions among communities and contribute nothing to a climate of reconciliation or dialogue. The scandal regarding the allegations made by Flora Brovina, a member of Kosovo's Parliament, are also very illuminating in that context. She was sentenced in Serbia for intent to commit a terrorist act, but in an act of goodwill on the part of my country, she was pardoned in 2001. She showed the media a photograph in the so-called Kosovo Assembly as proof of the alleged rape of an Albanian woman by Serbian forces and said that the woman, whose identity was known, was still living in Kosovo.

Upon investigation not by Belgrade but by the Kosovo Specialist Prosecutor's Office, with expert analysis by the Kosovo Forensics Agency, and based on other evidence, it was concluded that the photograph was a fake. The media in Pristina reported that the photograph had nothing to do with Kosovo but had originated in Iraq and been downloaded from the Internet. Does anyone really think that justice for victims and survivors can be achieved through the crude misuse of tragedy and the presentation of false evidence? Ms. Brovina's callous act was a deep offence to the victims and their families. The United States Ambassador to Pristina was explicit when he said that Kosovo's leaders should be helping victims heal, not exploiting them for political gain.

Where this sensitive issue is concerned, I want everyone to fully understand that Serbia condemns each and every act of sexual violence in conflict and calls for justice for all victims. To achieve that we need a rational, documented approach without politicization, and that is a precondition for protecting the rights of each individual victim. I want to reiterate that the number of victims does not diminish the horrific effect of this form of violence on each individual. However, manipulating numbers is detrimental to justice, leads to politicization and slows the reconciliation process. Based on the data provided by the commission responsible for the verification and recognition of the status of survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, the Secretary-General's report (S/2019/461) says that 982 applications have been submitted, of which 308 have been accepted. Pristina's representatives, however, continue to talk of 20,000 raped Albanians as if there were no Serbian victims of sexual violence. In that regard, Fatmir Limaj, among others, was indicted based on the testimony of the Mazreku brothers, Albanian witnesses and accomplices to his crime. And I would like to point out, if I may, that according to a decision of the Government and Parliament of Kosovo, Fatmir Limaj heads the Pristina negotiation team in the dialogue with Belgrade.

As I said in my statement to the Council in February (see S/PV.8459), I am not here for rhetorical one-upmanship. I am here to help bring lasting peace and normalcy to the people of Kosovo and Metohija. We must not let them down. We must pursue dialogue and achieve compromise. Our disputes will not bring a better life and prosperity to either Serbs or Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija. They will not provide security to Serbs, enable them to return home, see their property

restored, prevent physical attacks on them or allow them to live in peace and dignity. We must be bold, strong and inclusive of all. We must make sure that what is decided in the Council is respected and reflected on the ground, for it concerns the condition of many and speaks to who we are. This topic must not be allowed to cool or be superseded by some other acute political problem facing the international community because, contrary to Pristina's assertions otherwise, nothing has yet been resolved with respect to the question of Kosovo.

I therefore call on Pristina once again to revoke the senseless tariffs and return to dialogue, which is the only alternative for the Serbian and Albanian peoples. Serbia is ready to achieve a lasting solution through negotiations.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to Ms. Çitaku.

Ms. Çitaku: Twenty years ago this day, on 10 June 1999, in this Chamber, the predecessors of today's representatives, sitting around this very table, voted in favour of resolution 1244 (1999) and established the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (see S/PV.4011). The people of Kosovo will never forget that, on that day, it was the Council that stood for humankind. We will not forget that it was the allied forces that stopped the ethnic cleansing and brutalization of innocent civilians in Kosovo by Serbian forces. More than 10,000 innocent people were killed, approximately 20,000 women were raped and thousands are still missing. We will never forget that when more than 1 million refugees came back to find their homes in ashes, we had United Nations personnel by our side, helping us to rebuild our homes and our lives.

The wounds of war do not heal easily and they never truly disappear. But freedom has recuperative power — so slowly, but surely, we rebuilt. We drew strength from one another and had hope because we were not alone in our misfortune. Today and every day, we remember Sergio Vieira de Mello, the first Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Kosovo, and all the women and men of the United Nations who have served in Kosovo during the past two decades.

Much has been accomplished in Kosovo during the past 20 years and there is a lot the United Nations can be proud of. It may have been a laborious and undramatic task, but the Organization's contribution cannot be overstated. The United Nations helped build the youngest democracy in Europe and held our

hand through multiple transitions. And although the challenges were not in short supply or small in scale, the Organization stood by us when it mattered the most. Through all the ups and downs, the United Nations was our rock. It is only fitting that it was the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, the wise President Martti Ahtisaari, who, after years of negotiations, proposed that Kosovo declare its independence. As the International Court of Justice confirmed — and, might I add, upon Serbia's request — Kosovo was well within its rights when it declared independence and did not violate any international laws in doing so.

Allow me to be clear on the following point: Kosovo's independence is not a product of a secessionist movement. As members are all too keenly aware, Kosovo's independence is a product of decolonization. Nevertheless, the situation in Kosovo in 2019 is strikingly different from what it was 20 years ago when the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was first installed. Kosovo is no longer in a state of crisis. Our country has made enormous strides and is becoming increasingly integrated into the international community, in large part thanks to the efforts of the United Nations, which, in tandem with the European Union and NATO, has promoted security and stability in Kosovo and the region.

While we are deeply grateful to UNMIK for the vital role that it played in the first decade of our liberation, we simply do not see any reason for its continued presence in our thriving Republic. UNMIK is not an administrative mission because Kosovo governs itself. UNMIK is not a peacekeeping mission because Kosovo law enforcement mechanisms and the Kosovo Force guarantee the safety and security of our people. Can anyone in the Chamber tell me in all honesty what exactly the job of UNMIK in Kosovo is today? With so many issues plaguing people around the world at this very moment, I am certain that the resources that this institution allocates to Kosovo can be put to much better use elsewhere.

As we reflect on the progress that Kosovo has made during the past two decades, there is one particular element I would like to highlight and that is the Kosovo police. The Kosovo police is an organization that operates to the highest standards of professionalism and integrity. Since its inception, it has continuously proven to be a credible partner in global efforts to combat organized crime and terrorism by cooperating with international law enforcement mechanisms to

curtail dangerous plots. On 28 May, the Kosovo police successfully conducted a large-scale operation aimed at tackling organized crime across several municipalities in the Republic of Kosovo. That operation followed a months-long investigation, which began in April 2018, and examined several criminal groups involved in the misuse of official position, smuggling, bribery and illegal trade.

Based on the evidence collected by the Office of the Specialist Prosecutor of the Republic of Kosovo as part of that investigation, the Basic Court of Pristina authorized a request to raid a set of premises utilized by the suspected individuals. The targets were located in Zubin Potok, Leposavić, Vushtrri, the city of Mitrovica, Skenderaj and Drenas. In accordance with the Court's request and under the direction of the Office of the Specialist Prosecutor, the Kosovo police raided 12 premises and arrested 19 Kosovo police employees and nine civilians with outstanding arrest warrants. The arrested suspects are all citizens of Kosovo and include 11 Kosovo-Serbs, four Kosovo-Albanians and four Kosovo-Bosnians. The group consists of one commander of a police station, three sergeants and seven police officers. All of them have since been suspended from duty.

The Kosovo police did not encounter any resistance during the implementation of their action plan across the different municipalities, with one major exception. In Zubin Potok, police officers were met with armed resistance and gunfire and blocked by large barricades set up by violent gangs. During that phase of the action, Kosovo police officers apprehended seven civilians who were actively engaged in creating barricades and obstructing the operation.

Among them was a United Nations diplomat of Russian nationality named Mikhail Krasnoshchekov. Mr. Krasnoshchekov used an official United Nations vehicle with UNMIK licence plates to erect a barricade for the sole purpose of preventing Kosovo police from carrying out their mission. Kosovo police found evidence that Mr. Krasnoshchekov used the United Nations vehicle to transport a chainsaw to the location where these events took place. This chainsaw was used to cut down trees that were thrown onto the highway to prevent the passage of Kosovo police to Zubin Potok. Mr. Krasnoshchekov placed the United Nations vehicle in front of the trees to bolster the barricades.

He indicated that he understood the request of Kosovo police to leave the place. He refused to cooperate or to provide identification. After Mr. Krasnoshchekov's repeated refusals to comply with the demands of the police and his continued attempts to impede their movement, the Kosovo police proceeded to detain this individual. Mr. Krasnoshchekov was subsequently escorted to the police station where he was held in custody and offered medical treatment before being transported to medical facilities. I have the report of the hospital in Mitrovica where he was treated, which shows nothing serious — nothing like what we have heard here today. In the subsequent days, the Kosovo authorities decided to deny Mr. Krasnoshchekov future entry into the country. Upon his request, Mr. Krasnoshchekov was released and transferred to Belgrade.

The NATO military presence in Kosovo — the Kosovo Force — confirmed that the foregoing raids were part of an operation executed exclusively by Kosovo police and that all relevant authorities were informed. Three Kosovo police officers were injured during the efforts to remove the barricades used to obstruct this operation. Despite the obstacles, our officers were able to complete their mission.

I must admit that, in the light of these events, we in Kosovo were appalled by the unending stream of statements made in Belgrade and certain capitals around the world with regard to this very successful operation — an operation whose sole purpose was to combat crime committed with remarkable coordination of ethnicities, notwithstanding the efforts to portray it as an operation with underlying ethnic motivations. The sole intention of the police was to ensure the safety and security of the people of Kosovo and protect them from the gangs and criminal groups that make daily living in our country very difficult.

Kosovo has hosted a countless number of United Nations diplomats during the past two decades. They are our friends, our mentors and our family. No UNMIK employee has ever been in harm's way in Kosovo. They have never been targeted with threats, violence or attacks of any kind. To hear claims that the Kosovo police or Government deliberately targeted United Nations employees in Kosovo is beyond comprehension to those of us who live in Kosovo. Mr. Krasnoshchekov obstructed law enforcement in Kosovo of his own volition, or, to put it frankly, he willingly became a shield to criminal gangs attempting to inhibit an ongoing police operation. Furthermore, UNMIK personnel in

northern municipalities was warned with an instruction that advised them to work from home that day.

This episode is unheard of. It has nothing to do with the mandate of Mr. Krasnoshchekov or the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo.

I would like to know what would happen if any of us — accredited ambassadors and United Nations diplomatic personnel alike, with full diplomatic immunity — attempted to prevent an ongoing police operation here in New York or in Moscow or in Berlin or anywhere else, for that matter. The Government of Kosovo and its agencies comply fully with all international legislation regulating the status of diplomats stationed in our territory and adhere to all existing standards in terms of respecting the privileges of diplomatic personnel. However, we do find it surprising that a United Nations international civil servant, who has undergone advanced training for security in the field — mandatory training that is provided to every deployed United Nations staff member — suddenly finds himself barricading local roads in Kosovo with his official United Nations-issued vehicle. Are we to understand that the United Nations mandate in Kosovo has been extended to include active engagement in obstructing local law enforcement and preventing it from fulfilling its constitutional mandates?

A member of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo put the lives of our police officers at risk. Given the distressing nature of this incident, the institutions of the Republic of Kosovo demand a United Nations investigation into this unprecedented and dangerous behaviour. Judging from the statements that we have heard here today, it appears to us that law and order are an inconvenience for the authorities in Belgrade. What they desire is that chaos and fear will prevail. War-mongering is their preferred instrument for the manipulation of our citizens and the maintenance of control. We have seen it all: from character assassination to attempts at actual assassination. Allow me to remind the Security Council that the main suspect for the assassination of Mr. Oliver Ivanović found safe haven in Serbia, of all places.

We also heard the Council's references to the dialogue. Kosovo wants dialogue, but we do not want a conditioned process. It is Serbia that is conditioning the dialogue with Kosovo. We have also heard that Kosovo is not implementing the agreements. Kosovo has implemented every agreement. The only reason why

the Association Agreement is not being implemented is because local Serbs in Kosovo, who are supposed to be part of the Working Group's drafting of the Association statute, are being controlled from Belgrade and told to abandon Kosovo institutions. I will not even mention the lack of implementation of the agreement on energy, school diplomas, among others.

There is only one Government that exercises pressure against local Serbs in Kosovo, and that is the Government sitting in Belgrade. During just the past couple of months, we witnessed the detention of a member of the Kosovo Parliament, a Deputy Minister, and a Kosovo Government official of Serbian ethnicity by the Serbian Government. Their only crime was daring to speak their mind and act on their own free will.

The combination of a medieval mindset and modern propaganda adopted by the Serbian Government and State apparatus is a menace to peace. I cannot help but acknowledge their ongoing campaign to dehumanize the people of Kosovo, to portray us as inherently inferior, less than human and akin to savages. As despicable as that is, it is, unfortunately, no news to me. That happened in the 1980s and 1990s, and those are days that I remember well. But it also happened for centuries.

In 1913, a former Prime Minister of Serbia, Vladan Đorđević, characterized Albanians as blood-thirsty animals that are so inconceivably ignorant that they could not tell the difference between sugar and snow. Among the Albanians, he said, there seemed to have been humans with tails as late as the nineteenth century. Here we are, over a century later, listening to Serbian officials spewing hatred, continuing with the same baseless racist claims, attempting to rewrite history.

Let me make a small digression. What Flora Brovina, a member of the Kosovo Parliament, did was condemned unanimously in Kosovo. I was one of those who condemned it. But, unlike in Serbia, our media and our judiciary do not become complicit in politics. It was our media, our judiciary that stated the fact that the photograph was false, but that does not take away from the truth. It was the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an American-based health organization, that conducted the survey and came up with the number of women that were raped in Kosovo. That was not my number. And only a few months ago, right here in this Chamber, the President of Serbia had the audacity to

make a public plea to the Council for someone to tame those people (see S/PV.8427). Tame them, he said; tame them. Just last month, the Prime Minister of Serbia publicly stated, in reference to people of Kosovo, that those people literally just emerged from the woods.

I would love to hear them repeat those unconscionable statements to the women and men of Kosovo who make us proud every day with their achievements in art, sports and innovation. Let them unleash their vitriol before the families of the martyrs who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect their loved ones from the Serbian aggression. Let them unmask their true motivation. Let them show us their crippling fear of the ammunition of democracy: words and thoughts — words that are spoken abroad and thoughts stirring up at home. The people of Kosovo will not be tamed. We will not be subjugated, and we will not be ruled by Serbia ever again.

It is our hope that this Chamber will not lie abashed and distracted before triumphant assertions of ethnic hatred. The Republic of Kosovo will certainly never waiver in its quest for peace and justice. However dim the prospects may seem, we intend to fight. We will fight with the power of our ideas and the courage of our convictions, because surely that goal is sufficiently important to deserve our devotion.

One day the professionalism of our institutions will match the integrity of our media, the success of our artists and athletes, the strength of our women and the resilience of our civil society. On that day, we will have built an even better Republic — one that is independent, sovereign, integrated into the international community and at peace with its neighbours, including Serbia.

The invitation stands. Come visit Kosovo, and the Council can witness with its own eyes the progress that it has made possible. As an extra treat, it will be able to see the beautiful mountains from which we are so proud to come, because as the famous expression by Ernest Hemingway goes: mountaineering is the one true sport; everything else is merely a game.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now give the floor to those members of the Security Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Zahir Tanin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo and Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Ferreira de Serpa Soares, for their

briefings. I welcome His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and thank him for his statement. I also listened carefully to the statement of Ms. Çitaku.

Resolution 1244 (1999) sets an important legal basis for the settlement of the Kosovo issue. Our position on the Kosovo issue is consistent and clear. We believe that within the framework of relevant Security Council resolutions, the parties concerned should reach a mutually acceptable solution through dialogue. We see that as the best way to resolve the Kosovo issue.

China respects Serbia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We understand its legitimate concerns with regard to the Kosovo issue and commend its efforts to find a political solution to it. Achieving accommodation, reconciliation and harmonious coexistence across all ethnicities in Kosovo is in the fundamental interest of people from all ethnic backgrounds and would meet their needs for development. We hope that all the parties concerned will put the well-being of their people first, refrain from any rhetoric or action that could complicate or escalate the situation and build up conditions for a proper solution to the Kosovo issue, so as to jointly maintain peace, stability and development in the Balkan region

As things currently stand, it is important for the Security Council to remain seized of the Kosovo issue and encourage the two parties to carry out genuine dialogue with a view to facilitating a proper solution to the Kosovo issue. China supports the leadership of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Tanin in ensuring the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and constructive cooperation with all parties.

Recently, UNMIK personnel were obstructed in carrying out their mandated tasks. China is deeply concerned in that regard and considers such obstruction to be completely unacceptable. The privileges, immunities, safety and security of United Nations personnel must be fully respected. The parties concerned should ensure the necessary conditions for UNMIK to implement its mandate in line with the law.

Mr. Matjila (South Africa): South Africa welcomes the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), with the support of the United Nations Kosovo team and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General,

Mr. Zahir Tanin, as well as the Secretary-General, whose efforts are playing a significant role towards creating an environment conducive to compromise, reconciliation and stability in Kosovo, as outlined in the most recent report of the Secretary-General, up to 14 May (S/2019/461). We also welcome the briefing by Mr. De Serpa Soares, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel, and the legal clarity and opinions provided concerning the two United Nations staff members in Kosovo. We stand in support of his unbiased legal view on the issue. We would also like to welcome His Excellency Mr. Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, to this meeting and note the presence of the representative of Kosovo.

We wish to reiterate that the presence of the United Nations in Kosovo is critical to reaching a peaceful and sustainable solution and to encouraging cooperation among all parties and stakeholders in this situation, which has been ongoing for 20 years. In that regard, we wish to express our regret and concern about the developments in northern Kosovo last week, including the detention of two United Nations staff members by the Kosovo police during the course of their duties. We wish both staff members a speedy recovery as they are treated for their injuries. We reiterate the importance of all United Nations personnel across the world being able to do their work in a safe environment and in accordance with international law.

South Africa encourages Belgrade and Pristina to continue their efforts towards normalizing relations despite the challenges faced in finding a sustainable and peaceful political solution. We wish to reiterate the importance of the resumption of peace talks between the parties in a spirit of cooperation and compromise under the auspices of the European Union. Allow me to make three brief points with regard to the peace process in Kosovo in view of the persistent challenges to the resumption of talks between the two parties.

First, the escalated tensions between the parties and their differences regarding preconditions for the resumption of dialogue risk undermining any meaningful prospects for a successful dialogue and reconciliation. Those factors also deepen the divide and exacerbate the feelings of mistrust regarding the political will to engage in good faith. In that regard, we urge all parties to refrain from actions that further delay the peace process and to allow for the normalization of relations between them.

Secondly, South Africa wishes to echo the sentiments of the Secretary-General in his report regarding continued engagement with all stakeholders, such as the relevant authorities, civil society and bilateral and international partners. The peace process should not only be led by the political leaders but be informed by the local communities in Serbia and Kosovo, as both parties represent a diverse people in language, culture, heritage and history. That will play an important role in ensuring active support for peacebuilding and intercommunity trust-building efforts in Kosovo.

That brings me to my third and final point. The conflict between the parties has a significant impact on women and youth. We join the Secretary-General in welcoming the efforts of the United Nations in Pristina, in close cooperation with the European Union, to emphasize the involvement of women across all levels of political and decision-making processes during the Global Open Day on Women, Peace and Security. As indicated by Ulrika Richardson, United Nations Development Coordinator for Kosovo, “[g]ender equality is not only a fundamental human right; it is also a necessary foundation for a just and peaceful world.”

It is also our considered view that responses to address sexual violence in conflict situations must include survivors in order for them to share their experiences and possible solutions. In that respect, we welcome the active involvement of survivors of conflict-related sexual violence in finding solutions towards addressing their legal, social and institutional challenges, as reflected in the Pristina communiqué.

We also welcome the role of young people, whose efforts illustrate the importance of an inclusive peace process. The third annual Kosovo Youth Assembly, in collaboration with the United Nations country team in Kosovo, identified ways of empowering youth leadership across Kosovo. Those much-needed initiatives can contribute to long-term solutions for peace for all.

In conclusion, we hope that a spirit of compromise will be the foundation for negotiations towards an inclusive and fair settlement that is acceptable to both parties.

Mr. Cohen (United States of America): As members of the Security Council, we must ensure that we use the time and resources of the Council wisely and where the needs are greatest. In the light of last week’s open debate on working methods of the

Security Council (see S/PV.8539), today’s very lengthy relitigations of historical grievances, which do nothing to move things forward in Kosovo, only underscored the wisdom of our strong support for a reduced number of Council meetings on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). While the United Nations continues to have a useful role to play in Kosovo, that can be carried out through the United Nations country team. The United States would welcome a clear path to phase out UNMIK, which has achieved its original mandate, and a transition of its activities to a country team.

We share the Secretary-General’s concern about the heightened tensions between Belgrade and Pristina. The priority of both sides should be to lower tensions, remove barriers and immediately return to dialogue negotiations. For Kosovo, that means suspending tariffs on Serbian imports. For Serbia, that means avoiding provocative actions and words and ceasing its campaign against Kosovo’s international standing — an effort that runs counter to normalization.

Kosovo’s independence is a reality. Both parties need to advance on their respective European paths, which will take courageous leadership and flexibility. The twentieth anniversary of the end of the conflict in Kosovo should remind us all that it is time to move beyond the past and commit to a durable lasting peace for the future. Among the reforms necessary to advance European integration and economic growth, strengthening the rule of law is a top priority. The United States supports Kosovo’s lawful efforts to combat smuggling and corruption. The operation carried out by the Kosovo police on 28 May took place in various communities throughout Kosovo, targeted corrupt officials and other individuals and led to the arrest of suspects from multiple ethnicities.

It is deeply regrettable that Kosovo police officers encountered roadblocks, came under fire and were wounded during the operation. It is unacceptable to obstruct a legitimate law enforcement operation. The alleged involvement of two UNMIK personnel and an UNMIK vehicle is an issue of serious concern that we are following closely as the facts present themselves. As in any such operation, it is imperative that proper after-action investigations establish the facts, and we understand that those are ongoing.

Suspending the legitimate exercise of law enforcement is not in the interests of peace and stability

in the region or of any of the people of Kosovo, regardless of ethnicity. Such events once again demonstrate how critical it is for the parties to immediately return to dialogue negotiations to achieve a normalization deal.

Mr. Hickey (United Kingdom): Let me start by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General for their briefings today. I would also like to thank the Special Representative and his team for their continued dedication to Kosovo.

Since the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was authorized by the Security Council in 1999, Kosovo's development from a conflict zone into a democratic country has been significant, and UNMIK has played an important role in achieving that progress. Due to the change in the situation on the ground in these past 20 years, the United Kingdom supports a strategic review of the Mission to ensure that UNMIK's efforts are properly tailored to the current needs and addresses the challenges that Kosovo still faces. We continue to call on Kosovo to implement the necessary reforms that would allow it to strengthen further the rule of law, good governance, reconciliation and security.

The United Kingdom echoes the concern expressed by the Special Representative about the prolonged disengagement by both Pristina and Belgrade from the dialogue facilitated by the European Union (EU). We welcome the recent efforts of Germany and France to reinvigorate the process. Progress on the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia is in the interests of both countries, including in respect of their EU aspirations.

But the provocative language and actions of both Governments risks future progress. We call on the leaders to react in a measured, proportionate fashion that is reflective of the standing of their offices and to focus on reaching a comprehensive, sustainable agreement that enjoys domestic support. It is also important for both sides to implement all agreements already reached in order to build confidence between the parties.

We welcome the progress noted in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2019/461) on the common border crossing points and call for the resumption of coordination to enable the full implementation of the integrated border management technical protocol.

We welcome the important work done by UNMIK and the Government of Kosovo to address legacy issues, including by overseeing returns of displaced persons, verifying survivors of conflict-related sexual violence and investigated cases of missing persons. Justice for all victims and their families is crucial to future stability. We cannot allow a culture of impunity to exist. We call on both Pristina and Belgrade to provide all necessary support to existing domestic war crimes courts so as to ensure that outstanding war crimes cases are heard.

Corruption and organized crime negatively affect the people of Kosovo and those across Europe. We welcome Kosovo's efforts so far to tackle this scourge and urge that these efforts continue and, indeed, be increased and developed further. The Kosovo police operation on 28 May was a legitimate operation carried out in accordance with the law, which resulted in the arrest of 19 police officers suspected of involvement in smuggling and organized crime and targeted multiple ethnicities across a number of municipalities. It is with regret that we note the injuries sustained.

We are aware of the detention of two UNMIK officials during the course of the police operation. International personnel acting in the course of their duties must be treated in accordance with international law, just as they too must follow their missions' mandates and codes of conduct. It would be inappropriate for me and other members of the Council to comment further on that specific incident without clarification of the facts, and so we look forward to the outcome of UNMIK's internal review before commenting further.

The United Kingdom welcomes the establishment of the Anti-fraud Unit, progress on legal reforms to increase transparency in political parties and the recent convictions in several high-profile corruption cases. However, despite some progress on the rule of law, stronger, more consistent implementation of the rule of law and good governance structures are needed and will help Kosovo's integration into the international community.

The United Kingdom will continue to support Kosovo as it moves forward with its efforts to develop as a stable, prosperous, multi-ethnic State, including through our support of UNMIK. We strongly urge the Governments of Kosovo and Serbia to desist from the divisive rhetoric that has become all too common and to return to the EU-facilitated dialogue, in the interests of their peoples and European stability.

Mr. Schulz (Germany): Germany feels that this is a welcome opportunity to discuss forward-looking solutions. We are concerned that the Council should not be used or abused in attempts to rewrite or reinterpret history. We should try to come up with solutions in a concrete way.

In that spirit, Germany affirms its commitment to the dialogue facilitated by the European Union (EU) and normalization between Pristina and Belgrade. Also in that spirit, Chancellor Merkel and President Macron hosted a meeting in Berlin on 29 April and will continue their efforts to support the EU-facilitated process and to restore the trust of both sides in the normalization dialogue. To that end, Chancellor Merkel also received Kosovo's Prime Minister Ramush Haradinaj on 6 June in Berlin.

Pristina and Belgrade share the goal of EU membership and both sides share the responsibility to reduce tensions and continue the dialogue — “dialogue” meaning “real dialogue”. Too often, this seems to be based on a belief in an equation that says monologue plus monologue equals dialogue. That seems to be a real problem. We need true, genuine and honest dialogue. We want to use our good offices to support that wherever we can. Good relations between both sides are in the interests of the people of Kosovo and Serbia.

We call upon the Kosovo Government to revoke the tariffs on products from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Those tariffs contravene the Central European Free Trade Agreement and are a clear contradiction of Kosovo's regional integration efforts. In that context, the vision of a greater Albania is counterproductive, and all the more so when it is uttered by leading politicians. We likewise urge the Serbian Government to refrain from actions that undermine an environment conducive to negotiations. This concerns, for example, efforts to persuade other countries to withdraw their recognition of Kosovo. Both parties need to tone down the rhetoric and communicate more clearly to their respective constituencies why comprehensive and sustainable agreement is in the mutual interest. Increased stability in both countries and the region brought about by such an agreement is clearly in the interest of all. Our position is well known. We remain convinced that border changes along ethnic lines do not contribute to such a solution.

Let me just briefly refer to the police operation on 28 May. Let me be clear regarding our views on this

operation in general. Kosovo has every right to combat corruption and organized crime with determination and in accordance with the rule of law. We welcome efforts to combat criminal activities throughout Kosovo. These efforts should not be limited to but also include the north. At the same time, international personnel must be treated strictly in accordance with international law. We look forward to a swift and thorough investigation into the treatment of the personnel of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) on 28 May.

Let me say in general that the immunity accorded to United Nations officials is very important. We discussed this in a different case about an expert on the Panel of Experts for Libya a few weeks ago. That was very important, and it is equally important here that the immunity of United Nations personnel in each case be respected. I say that without prejudging any results of the ongoing investigation, obviously.

With regard to the strategic review of UNMIK, we have stated previously that we believe it is high time for such a review. Since UNMIK was first mandated in 1999, the situation in Kosovo has changed drastically, and we believe that the Mission needs to adapt to that new reality. It is the Mission's operating environment that has changed, and it is time for a transition of many of the tasks of UNMIK, either to Kosovar institutions or to other international institutions that have taken over UNMIK's original role.

Before I conclude, let me cite two examples of our efforts, together with our partners, to implement Security Council decisions on the ground and to build sustainable peace by supporting concrete measures that meaningfully complement initiatives towards a comprehensive and sustainable agreement.

The first example I would like to cite is that we support the effort in Kosovo to adopt and implement a survivor-centred approach to addressing conflict-related sexual violence, in line with resolution 2467 (2019). As mentioned by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2019/461), the Jahjaga Foundation, the Embassy of Germany and the United Nations Kosovo team organized a conference on this topic on 8 March that adopted the so-called Pristina communiqué, focused on conflict-related sexual violence.

Let me conclude by citing another practical example for the need and benefit of closer regional cooperation. Together with our French partners, we have started an

initiative to better control small arms, which are all too readily available in the region. Last week, the six countries met in Sarajevo to take stock of the situation, and we are encouraged by the progress achieved and the commitment to the initiative shown by the countries in the region.

Mrs. Gueguen (France) (*spoke in French*): I too thank Mr. Zahir Tanin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares, United Nations Legal Counsel, for their briefings. I would also like to thank Mr. Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and Ms. Çitaku, Ambassador of Kosovo to the United States, for their statements.

With regard to working methods, and this goes for all Council meetings, I would note the request, repeated on many occasions, for briefers to limit their presentations to 15 minutes.

Twenty years after the end of the conflict in Kosovo and the deployment of NATO's military force, the Kosovo Force, Kosovo is living in peace. In the light of the many ongoing intercommunal tensions, that peace is, admittedly, fragile, but it should spur us to redouble our efforts to meet the aspirations of the people there. In the spirit of that objective, I would like to briefly highlight three points.

First of all, I commend the role of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in continuing to successfully promote security, stability and human rights in Kosovo. In recognition of the continuing stability challenges in the Western Balkans, France recently adopted a national strategy to increase its support for the sustainable stabilization of the region, its economic and social development and the strengthening of the rule of law. The strategy sets out concrete measures for economic and social development, with the participation of the French Development Agency. It contemplates several actions in the field of security, including a Franco-German initiative to combat trafficking in small arms and light weapons; and, in the fields of justice and defence, it calls for enhanced cooperation. However, while we must support the stabilization of the Western Balkans, the main responsibility lies first and foremost with the countries of the region — as Northern Macedonia and Greece demonstrated with the historic Prespa agreement, which I welcome once again.

I now come to my second point — the regrettable lack of dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina since November and the high level of tension between the two parties, which is unsustainable. This stalemate explains the approach of the President of the Republic Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel to invite Kosovo, Serbia, the countries of the region and the European Union to a summit in Berlin on 29 April, as the German representative has just mentioned. The challenge was to convince both sides to resume dialogue. Efforts to achieve that objective are ongoing.

In order to achieve the resumption of genuine dialogue, it is essential that each party refrain from actions, declarations or measures that could exacerbate tensions, as Mr. Schulz just explained. In that regard, I reiterate our request that the 100 per cent tariff imposed by the Kosovo Government on products from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina be lifted or, at the very least, suspended.

The Kosovo police operation on 28 May has been mentioned by several speakers, and I, too, will touch upon it briefly. France, naturally, supports the fight against organized crime and corruption in Kosovo, in full respect of the rule of law, which we wish to see consolidated. Given the local context, particularly in the north of the country, it is nevertheless essential that such operations be proportionate. Furthermore, as the Legal Counsel pointed out, we highlight the importance of respect for the privileges and immunities of all United Nations personnel, including those of UNMIK, as defined in the 1946 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. We will carefully review the results of UNMIK's internal investigation.

Finally, I should like to highlight the role of the European Union in the Western Balkans region. In our view, the stability of the region is first and foremost a European matter. The European Union is thus leading a mediation process that will resume once both parties are ready to relaunch the dialogue. Some progress has already been made, for example the conclusion of many technical agreements between Serbia and Kosovo in the early 2010s, facilitated by the European Union. The challenge now is to reach a comprehensive and legally binding agreement between the two parties.

The European future of Serbia and Kosovo depends largely on the conclusion of such an agreement. In addition, there are many reforms to strengthen the rule

of law, which is at the heart of the European project. The primary responsibility for the European prospects of Serbia and Kosovo lies primarily with the political leaders of those countries. Only the full normalization of relations between Pristina and Belgrade will make it possible to achieve that European future, which is a shared future. We encourage First Deputy Prime Minister Dačić and Ambassador Çitaku to redouble their efforts to that end. They can always count on the fraternal support of France.

Mr. Djani (Indonesia): At the outset, Indonesia would like to thank Mr. Zahir Tanin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, for their briefings on the recent situation in Kosovo. I would also like to welcome Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, to New York.

We take note of the Secretary-General's report (S/2019/461), and would like to join others in expressing our deep concern about the recent situation in the field. Today, I would like to bring three points to the attention of the Council.

First, Indonesia calls for the cessation of political hostilities in the region. We reiterate the call of resolution 1244 (1999) for all parties to engage in peaceful dialogue to resolve the political conflict. It is imperative for the parties to refrain from provocations and political hostilities, which are not constructive and do not contribute to creating an environment that is conducive to dialogue. Allegations and inflammatory rhetoric can only add salt to the wounds. Ultimately, all parties must fully commit to peaceful means, through dialogue and negotiation. But we need more than good will to start a dialogue; we need sincerity to build trust instead of provocations and trade wars. Each party must refrain from any action that could exacerbate tensions and undermine efforts toward normalization, including the imposition of import tariffs.

Secondly, the Government of Indonesia upholds the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Serbia as a Member of the United Nations, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Thirdly, I would like to once again reiterate the important role of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Indonesia greatly appreciates UNMIK's multipronged approach to engaging grass-roots communities through various

forums, conferences and trust-building projects. We also welcome UNMIK's support for the participation of young people in decision-making processes and cross-community dialogue. Young people are the future. We have to place our trust in the young generation while maintaining a positive attitude and setting aside political or ethnic interests. We also support trust-building efforts, as explained by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Tanin. Town hall debates on key issues, cross-community engagement, religious tolerance programmes, languages, gender equality and human rights programmes certainly contribute to closer engagement.

Despite the positive progress made by UNMIK in this area and many others, we are deeply saddened by the fact that several UNMIK staff members have been arrested and injured by the authorities in northern Kosovo, as mentioned by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Tanin and Under-Secretary-General De Serpa Soares. Those actions are clearly a violation of international law and the immunities granted to international United Nations staff members.

We share the Secretary-General's concern about the heightened tensions between Belgrade and Pristina, as well as his view on the importance of resuming dialogue between the parties under the auspices of the European Union — as many have stated this morning — without further delay in order to bring unity back to the region. It has been many months and far too long since the last meeting between the two parties, under the auspices of the European Union. It should be clear that peace will be sustained only if there is reconciliation, and reconciliation will happen only if both parties sit together, at the same table, with trust, confidence and faith in the whole process of political dialogue.

We regret the use of inflammatory rhetoric and statements, including in this Chamber, which certainly does not help the situation. There is an urgent need and hope to find durable peace for the peoples involved. I share the view that it is important for all of us to find a solution and to avoid any further statements that do not contribute to creating a conducive environment.

Mrs. Mele Colifa (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin by thanking Mr. Zahir Tanin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), and Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and

United Nations Legal Counsel, for their informative briefings on the progress made in recent months in Kosovo. I also thank His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, and to Ms. Vlora Çitaku, Ambassador of Kosovo to the United States, for their statements.

Equatorial Guinea wishes to express its concern and condemn the events that took place in the north of Kosovo on 28 May, during which two United Nations personnel were detained by the Kosovo police. We echo the words of Mr. Tanin in highlighting the need for all parties to commit themselves to respect the principles of law and dignity for all, to work constructively together with the United Nations and to refrain from any action that could lead to the escalation of tensions in order to maintain calm and security on the ground.

As reflected in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2019/461) and Mr. Tanin's briefing, the situation in the Kosovo region is still worrying. The lack of progress in the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina and the inflammatory rhetoric and provocative actions of the parties are having a negative effect on the situation on the ground and hindering initiatives to relaunch a productive dialogue between the parties.

During our last briefing on Kosovo (see S/PV.8459), several members of the Council expressed our concern about the impact that the decision to increase tariffs on the importation of Serbian and Bosnian products would have on the normalization of dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. As reflected in the Secretary-General's report, this decision is resulting in an escalation of tensions between the parties and undermining diplomatic efforts to reach a final agreement on the Kosovo issue.

Likewise, we are also concerned that, during the reporting period, no meetings were held between Belgrade and Pristina. In this regard, we remind the parties that ensuring security and stability in Kosovo requires the commitment of both parties to pursuing the dialogue. We therefore encourage them to continue these efforts with the aim of achieving stability on the ground and respecting the implementation of the agreements reached.

We also wish to highlight the fact that the reporting period also saw some significant progress. In this regard, we welcome the new measures taken in the fight against corruption, progress in the prevention of violent

extremism and support for initiatives to facilitate the return of displaced persons throughout the region, as well as other projects that are being carried out on the ground, with the help of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, UNMIK and the United Nations team, to foster dialogue and trust between the parties.

For these reasons, we call on the parties to intensify their commitment and efforts to generate the conditions conducive to a constructive dialogue and thereby the resumption of relations between Belgrade and Pristina. This would demonstrate their commitment to improving and protecting the rule of law, as well as safeguarding the good relations of trust among communities throughout Kosovo, thereby promoting development, peace and security in Kosovo.

In conclusion, we believe that all parties should continue to act in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and within the framework of resolution 1244 (1999) and existing agreements so that, through dialogue, they can find a peaceful and lasting solution that benefits everyone.

Once again, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea reaffirms its respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia, and appreciates its continued efforts to facilitate an inclusive, peaceful and political solution to the situation. We encourage UNMIK to continue to achieve its goals and priorities to promote security, stability and respect for human rights in Kosovo. We also commend the support it provides to all communities in Kosovo and all regional and international actors.

Mr. Adom (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): I too thank Mr. Zahir Tanin, Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), and Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, for their enlightening briefings. I also welcome the participation of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia in this meeting, as well as that of the Ambassador of Kosovo to the United States of America.

Côte d'Ivoire notes with concern the lack of significant progress in the dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade. This dialogue should pave the way towards a definitive settlement of the Kosovo issue and lead to reconciliation between the two countries. We are therefore worried by the persistence of tensions that are further exacerbating the climate of mistrust between

Serbia and Kosovo and could even serve to catalyse the deterioration of the sociopolitical and security situation between the two countries and in the Balkans more generally. My country therefore calls on the Serbian and Kosovar parties to work responsibly and in good faith to preserve the gains made by pursuing dialogue, especially under the auspices of the European Union. In this connection, we believe that the issues of import tariffs and the immunity of United Nations officials need to be urgently addressed.

Maintaining and even strengthening stability as it stands must be a top priority for the international community. It must justify the tireless efforts of the United Nations and other institutional actors to normalize the situation between Belgrade and Pristina. That is why my country is satisfied to note the desire expressed by Presidents Aleksandar Vučić and Hashim Thaçi to pursue this critical dialogue in Paris in July 2019.

Côte d'Ivoire is convinced that no obstacle, no matter how complex, is impossible to overcome in the dispute between Kosovo and Serbia so long as both parties engage, resolutely and in good faith, in dialogue to reach bold compromises that will guarantee peace and stability for their peoples and for the Balkans.

We commend the European Union for its mediation efforts and believe that it should continue to play a leading role concerning the issue, as it pertains in particular to preventive diplomacy efforts to be undertaken with a view to normalizing relations between Kosovo and Serbia.

With regard to the comprehensive implementation of the Brussels Agreement, my country takes this opportunity to reiterate its appreciation for the excellent work done by UNMIK personnel in support of the Government of Kosovo. We also reiterate our full support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Tanin, given his remarkable personal commitment. The support of UNMIK is crucial as it could become a genuine catalyst of efforts geared towards reconciliation among the various communities, which is a prerequisite for restoring peaceful coexistence between Kosovo and Serbia. To that end, it is worth noting and acknowledging the initiative to promote the learning of the Albanian and Serbian languages in both communities, as well as the holding of the third annual Kosovo Youth Assembly.

Various other initiatives aimed at women and young people, among others, also deserve to be commended.

Côte d'Ivoire also encourages the authorities of Kosovo to pursue their efforts to entrench the rule of law and combat corruption and impunity. Similarly, we welcome the outstanding contribution of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, which has helped to build transparent, democratic and multi-ethnic institutions in the country since 2008.

Like the memory of peoples and States emerging from particularly violent conflicts, such as that which rocked the Balkans in the 1990s, deep stigmas and divergences have been slow to fade, and relations between Serbia and Kosovo are the perfect illustration of that. However, those two sovereign entities must agree to maintain good-neighbourly relations and should create the conditions for lasting peace and stability between their countries in particular, and in the Balkans in general, to ensure the happiness of their respective peoples.

Mr. Singer Weisinger (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting.

We thank Mr. Tanin for the commendable work done by him and his team. We also thank Mr. João Miguel Ferreira de Serpa Soares; Mr. Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia; and Ambassador Çitaku for being with us today.

The Dominican Republic notes with concern the continuing tensions between Belgrade and Pristina. In this situation, it is vital that the parties honour the commitments made in the Brussels Agreement and in the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). We urge them to be more flexible in their positions and to work to resume negotiations for the normalization of relations between the parties. We also urge that those negotiations continue under the auspices of the European Union, which, as facilitator, continues to play a fundamental role in the process. We acknowledge the crucial role played by the United Nations in support of peace and the strengthening of institutions on the ground, mainly through the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

We join the Secretary-General in calling on the parties to refrain from engaging in inflammatory rhetoric and provocative actions that could hinder the

continuation of dialogue. The Dominican Republic encourages Kosovar and Serb leaders to take action in favour of the ongoing process, since decisive political will is required in order to accelerate the negotiations. That includes refraining from taking unilateral measures that could slow progress in the implementation of commitments. In that context, we believe that maintaining the increase in tariffs on products from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina not only obstructs trade but also harms peace talks.

We applaud the meeting held on 29 April in Berlin, in the framework of the summit of Western Balkan leaders, convened by Germany and France. It is encouraging that, on that occasion, Pristina and Belgrade agreed on their intention to move forward with the implementation of existing agreements and to participate constructively in the process of normalizing relations in the current format. We take note of and support the initiative to hold another meeting in Paris in early July.

We stress the need to pursue efforts to incorporate the various sectors of society into the current political process. In that regard, we commend the initiatives and events organized by UNMIK, in collaboration with UN-Women and the European Union, to enable and promote greater participation and women's empowerment, in line with the women and peace and security agenda. We also welcome activities to promote the integration of young people into the dynamics of confidence-building and the promotion of peace. In that regard, we congratulate UNMIK and UNICEF on the holding of the third annual Kosovo Youth Assembly in April, in the framework of the Mission's strategy on youth, peace and security. We would also like to highlight the support of the United Nations team, the Special Representative and all those working together to involve young people in decision-making processes, initiatives for inter-community dialogue and the promotion of political and social reconciliation.

The Dominican Republic recognizes the positive impact of achieving impartial justice in Kosovo, as it effectively helps to build the people's trust in official institutions. In that context, we believe it necessary to pursue efforts to create mechanisms that guarantee respect for and the full exercise of the rights of citizens. That means that justice can provide timely and effective responses to the victims of gender-based violence and survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

With regard to the events of 28 May, in which two UNMIK employees were detained during a police operation, we hope that the facts will be clarified in a timely manner and that the truth will be uncovered so that relevant action may be taken.

We stress the importance of strengthening the rule of law in Kosovo. We therefore welcome actions and provisions that guarantee full respect for and the protection of human rights. We take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, through its monitoring and operational pillars. In that regard, we welcome the efforts made by the Mission to facilitate agreements pertaining to freedom of movement and support for the Specialist Prosecutor's Office and the Specialist Chambers. We welcome the resumption of the search for missing persons cases and condemn any attempt to obstruct such tasks.

Lastly, we reiterate our support and appreciation for the work conducted by UNMIK, the Kosovo Force, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to build sustainable peace in Kosovo.

Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): We have followed the most recent developments in northern Kosovo with some concern. We fully support the need to combat corruption and organized crime, which is part of Kosovo's reform agenda. We reiterate the importance of both sides respecting the rule of law in those efforts. It is important that the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) be able to continue its work in line with its mandate, without constraints and with complete independence.

We await the results of UNMIK's internal investigation in order to clarify the 28 May incident. I would like to thank Legal Counsel Miguel de Serpa Soares for reminding us of the rules governing the immunity of United Nations staff.

These developments unfortunately reveal a climate of mistrust between the two parties. It is important that the parties refrain from any action or statement that may cause tensions. In this context, we reiterate our call to the Kosovo authorities to eliminate the 100 per cent customs duties on products from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The future of Serbia and Kosovo lies within the European Union and will be attained through dialogue.

We welcome the meeting between leaders of Serbia and Kosovo in Berlin, and we call on both sides to seize the opportunity offered by the next meeting in July in Paris to resume the dialogue under the auspices of the European Union. We hope that the Serbian and Kosovar leaders will show the necessary political courage.

It is important that the parties implement all the commitments they undertook in the dialogue in order to create a climate conducive to the normalization of their relations. The conclusion of a comprehensive and legally binding agreement on the normalization of relations is the only way to achieve a lasting settlement of the dispute between the two parties and to guarantee regional stability. Such an agreement is also a condition for the European integration of Serbia and Kosovo.

We encourage the participation of women both in the process of normalizing relations between Belgrade and Pristina and in the Kosovar political process. It is important to include women in the various stages of the decision-making process and also to take their needs into account. Their participation is essential to achieving a just and lasting peace and reconciliation. We welcome the efforts of UNMIK and UN-Women in this regard.

Since the adoption of resolution 1244 (1999) 20 years ago, Kosovo has made considerable progress, thanks to the presence of the international community. The United Nations and UNMIK in particular have played a key role in this regard. The European Union, which Serbia and Kosovo aspire to join, has also made a significant contribution through the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo. We believe that it is important for the international community to contribute to creating the conditions for the normalization of relations between Serbia and Kosovo.

Ms. Wroniecka (Poland): At the outset, let me thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Tanin and Under-Secretary-General De Serpa Soares for their briefings today. I would also like to thank Deputy Prime Minister Dačić and Ambassador Çitaku for their statements before the Security Council.

As this is the second of three meetings we will have this year on this subject, with next year seeing only two, let me say that in our view this welcome reduction reflects the fact that the situation on the ground is stable, thus allowing the Council to turn its attention elsewhere.

As concerns the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, let me repeat our call for a strategic review of the Mission. Eleven years have passed since the last strategic review. A fresh reassessment of the Mission's comparative advantage is obviously needed. At this point, we would like to also express our appreciation and support for the role of the Kosovo Force and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo as well as other international organizations in Kosovo for their efforts aimed at fostering a safe and secure environment and the rule of law.

Looking at the overall picture in Kosovo, let me make the following remarks.

Most important of the issues by far is the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina. This is the key not only to unlocking the potential of both countries on their way to European integration, but also to the stability of the whole region. We strongly urge Kosovo and Serbia to take cues from Greece and North Macedonia, which settled their long-standing dispute by way of negotiations. We would like to see the meaningful resumption of the European Union-facilitated dialogue and call on both sides to show commitment towards reaching a legally binding agreement on comprehensive normalization of relations. In this context, we encourage Kosovo to remove punitive tariffs on goods from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina and equally encourage Serbia to halt its actions aimed at undermining Kosovo's international position. We call on both to show goodwill and openness.

With respect to the situation in Kosovo, we commend progress on the way of reform and in strengthening the rule of law. We also note with appreciation efforts aimed at fighting corruption, organized crime and violent extremism.

A lot has already been achieved, but still more needs to be done. Improvements in the legal framework need to be matched by changes in the political culture. It is incumbent upon political elites to continue their efforts to create a just and inclusive environment and lay a solid foundation for the future prosperity of all citizens.

Let me conclude by saying that Poland regards Kosovo as being fully capable of managing its own future, and we stand ready to extend our assistance in

this effort and share our experience as we have done so far.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We appreciate the convening of this meeting and the important briefings by Mr. Zahir Tanin, and by Mr. João Miguel Ferreira de Serpa Soares, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel. We also welcome the presence of Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and Ambassador Vlora Çitaku.

Peru recognizes the important progress made in strengthening the situation in Kosovo over the past 11 years. However, its real progress and prosperity transcend political and economic reforms, requiring mechanisms for dialogue and reconciliation. In this regard, we are concerned about the serious exacerbation of tensions among the various strata of the political class, as noted in the Secretary-General's report (S/2019/461), which has regrettable repercussions in unfortunate social incidents. Political leaders are called upon to set an example of prioritizing the interests of the wider public, thereby contributing to strengthening trust and good-neighbourly relations.

In this regard, we consider the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina to be imperative. To that end, we invoke the commitment of the parties to resolution 1244 (1999) and the Brussels Agreement, and we call on them to take, in a constructive manner and in good faith, the necessary steps to resume the dialogue facilitated by the European Union.

We also believe that it is essential to respect and strengthen the rule of law and the legitimacy of institutions. We therefore highlight the work of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, as well as the role of the Specialist Chambers in support of this task. Along those lines, we welcome the pending judicial hearings and the entry into force of the new penal code and the initiatives aimed at combating corruption and organized crime, in accordance with the law, human rights and international agreements and standards. In that regard, we regret the incident on 28 May involving a staff member of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and hope that the facts will soon be clarified. Peru reaffirms the responsibility of Governments to respect the immunity of United Nations officials and of those officials to act impartially in carrying out their duties.

However, we also want to recognize the initiatives undertaken by UNMIK, in coordination with United Nations system entities, to promote human rights, the empowerment of young people, gender equality and the protection of children and intercommunal dialogue. All of that must be accompanied by the full recognition and establishment of guarantees for the population's ethnic, religious and cultural diversity, including full respect for the linguistic rights of minorities, a safe and dignified return for internally displaced persons, and the protection of historical and cultural heritage.

We would like to conclude by reiterating our appreciation of the work of undertaken by UNMIK, the Kosovo Force, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other international bodies committed to the shared task of building sustainable peace in Kosovo.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the participation in today's meeting of Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and share his serious concerns about the situation in Kosovo. We are grateful to Mr. Zahir Tanin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), for his informative briefing on the situation in Kosovo. In general we share his assessments. We also thank Mr. De Serpa Soares, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel, for the clarifications he provided. We also listened attentively to Ms. Vlora Çitaku's statement, but frankly there is nothing to thank her for other than for being an eloquent exemplar of lies, insinuations and historical fantasies inciting hatred that are not worthy of the Security Council Chamber. And that is instead of simply apologizing for the marauding acts of her compatriots, which to be honest is what many of us were expecting.

In spite of the fact that the events of 28 May in northern Kosovo were not included in the Secretary-General's report under consideration on the situation in Kosovo (S/2019/461), we believe it would have been entirely logical to make them a priority focus for today's meeting considering the all too blatant illegality of the Kosovo authorities' outrageous actions. Under the unlikely watchword of combating organized crime, Kosovo Albanian special forces invaded Serb municipalities in northern Kosovo. As a result, 28 people were arrested, mostly Serbian police officers.

Mikhail Krasnoshchekov, a citizen of the Russian Federation and staff member of UNMIK, was beaten and detained while carrying out his duties. Ms. Çitaku has just provided us with a completely absurd version of the actions of Mr. Krasnoshchekov, whose last name Pristina did not even bother to write down correctly. Apparently he was felling trees for barricades, put his chainsaw carefully in the trunk, stood in front of the barricades and then refused to provide his identification as an UNMIK staffer. Does she even believe such rubbish herself? An investigation is understandably under way, but I have two questions for Mr. Tanin. Did Mr. Krasnoshchekov produce his UNMIK staff identification, and was he beaten? Ms. Çitaku just claimed that none of that happened. However, we have a large number of photographs that confirm the opposite. Incidentally, there are quite a lot of videos on the Internet showing the Kosovo special forces' thuggish and unpunished actions. I would be grateful for answers.

I would like to remind the Council that during the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina with the participation and support of the West, an understanding was reached that the Kosovo Special Police Unit, who are armed with long guns, would not enter the northern areas where Serbs live. It was an unwritten gentleman's agreement of sorts. However, in the past few years such incursions have happened again and again with the full connivance of the Kosovo Force, which is mandated by the Security Council to ensure peace and security in Kosovo. We believe that those actions were intentional, deliberate and meant to provoke. Such zealous crime-fighting has not previously been typical of the Pristina authorities, and the timing of the attack was not accidental. As it happened, on the eve of the events President Aleksandar Vučić of Serbia had indicated in a statement in Parliament his willingness to work on a compromise solution to the Kosovo issue. However, the Kosovo Albanian authorities nevertheless decided to show that they were already the boss in the north. Incidentally, just the week before, the Serbian parties had had a major win over Albanian parties in the municipal elections. The attempt to take control of the north legally had failed, so they switched to the second option of doing it by force.

People in the Balkans remember the events of the 1990s very well. One careless word or gesture is enough to lead to new bloodshed and for simmering conflict to catch fire with renewed force. Why was it necessary

to consciously provoke such a situation? Kosovo's Western backers have all but ignored this aggressive action, including a crude, premeditated violation of a United Nations staff member's immunity. Today our United States colleagues could not even manage a few words in defence of United Nations staffers' immunity. While Pristina, through Ms. Çitaku, had just made it unambiguously clear that it does not intend to respect United Nations immunity going forward. Its erosion is likely to have serious consequences for both the Organization and its members. I think we all understand that perfectly well. If we let things slide now, United Nations personnel in other parts of the world could find themselves in a similar situation in the future, and then it will be too late to appeal to universal diplomatic norms.

Pristina has launched a propaganda campaign against both the United Nations and Russia. Its motives are clear — first, discredit UNMIK and get it closed down, and secondly, affirm its so-called statehood at any cost. The so-called Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Kosovo has declared Mr. Krasnoshchekov *persona non grata*. As was already emphasized today, that procedure is not applicable to United Nations staff and can be used by States only in the context of their bilateral relations. Yet even in those cases the Kosovars have no right to take such a step because they do not have international legal standing as a subject. Clearly, an understanding of the finer points of international law is not Kosovo officials' strong point.

The European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo has advised us to entrust the investigation of the incident to the very Kosovo police who as we understand it were responsible for it. Proposing to seek the truth from the Kosovo's outlaw police force, who knowingly violated all written and unwritten norms in beating up a United Nations staff member and then began creating a false picture of the events with the support and participation of Kosovo's highest authorities, is an absurd mockery. It devalues the European Union's role in Kosovo and its claims to be helping to ensure the rule of law there.

I would like to point out that this is not the first time that there has been a provocation involving a Russian staff member working for UNMIK. A Russian UNMIK volunteer was previously detained by the Kosovo police under false pretences. And now the so-called Foreign Ministry of Kosovo is asking the Secretary-General to reduce the United Nations presence, which is supposedly discrediting itself, and to conduct the much-discussed

review of the Mission. These are all links in the same chain. Representatives of some States, permanent members of the Security Council, are cultivating the same behind-the-scenes tactics as the Secretariat, and we are aware of that. Fabricated stories, with no basis in reality, about so-called Russian spies are now becoming a trend in the West. We firmly reject such unscrupulous manoeuvres. The mandates of peacekeeping missions should be considered at the Security Council table, not rewritten in the corridors.

The years of indulgence that the Pristina authorities have had from the West have resulted in their deliberate defiance of their patrons. The so-called Kosovo Albanian Government, led by Ramush Haradinaj, is keeping to its course of exacerbating the crisis and is clearly unwilling to hold a substantive dialogue. The calls from Brussels for normalizing relations, which for some reason are addressed to both parties, only strengthen one party's feeling that everything is permitted, pushing it to take maximalist approaches with no room for compromise outcomes. The 100 per cent tariffs on goods from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina that Kosovo imposed in November are still in force, and we view the so-called Kosovo Assembly's resolution on Serbian genocide, adopted on 16 May, in the same context, something that serves only to incite hatred between the two peoples. This entire flurry of anti-Serb actions is designed to overcome Kosovo's permanent internal political impasse in Kosovo and is a reflection of the fractured relations between clans in Pristina, which the representatives of various Kosovo Albanian political forces have themselves spoken about frankly.

We continue to insist that the decision made on 14 December 2018 by the so-called Parliament to transform the Kosovo Security Force into a fully fledged army is a flagrant violation of resolution 1244 (1999), which includes a totally clear requirement that any armed Kosovo Albanian groups must be demilitarized and permits only international forces to have a presence on Kosovan territory. We would like to point to the lack of transparency in the activities of the NATO Bondsteel military facility in Kosovo. What is the true reason for that base's existence? Could it be a stealthy way to pull Kosovo into NATO?

Russia's position on the Kosovo settlement is well known. We support Belgrade and Pristina in arriving at a viable and mutually acceptable solution on the basis of resolution 1244 (1999). In our view, forcing a so-called final normalization between Belgrade and Pristina

and tying it to any artificial deadlines is destructive. A sustainable solution to the Kosovo problem is not possible without the endorsement not only of the parties concerned but also of the Security Council, as this is a matter related to the maintenance of international peace and security. There is no alternative to dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. In that connection, we would like to remind the Council of a key agreement reached within that framework on the formation of a community of Serb-majority municipalities in Kosovo, which the Kosovo Albanian authorities have been sabotaging for the past six years. Implementing that key element of the First Agreement of Principles Governing the Normalization of Relations between Kosovo and Serbia, signed in Brussels on 19 April 2013, is a crucial indicator for the possibility of any future substantive discussions. We want to draw the Secretariat's attention to the importance of carefully monitoring developments in the situation, which, as the facts I have stated show, requires a close watch on the part of the international community.

It is also clear to us after today's meeting that those who fly in the face of common sense and the deteriorating situation on the ground by insisting on reducing the time allocated to discussion of the Kosovo issue in the Security Council have been utterly shamed. Our discussion has once again affirmed that without the Security Council's close attention, the Kosovo Albanian authorities will end up having total faith in their impunity and ability to do as they please, which risks driving the region into a new bloody clash, something that neither Council members nor the leadership of Serbia and its neighbours want.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Kuwait.

At the outset, I thank Mr. Zahir Tanin for his briefing and Mr. De Serpa Soares for his clarifications regarding the incident in northern Kosovo on 28 May. I also welcome His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, and Ms. Vlora Çitaku, Ambassador of Kosovo to the United States, and thank them for their statements.

We are following with concern the increasing tensions between Belgrade and Pristina, which could affect the prospects for the resumption of a productive dialogue between them. We urge them to refrain from

inflammatory statements and provocative actions that could hinder the progress that has been made. We call on Belgrade and Pristina to show restraint, take all necessary measures to calm the situation, defuse tensions and overcome obstacles while demonstrating the political will necessary to reach a comprehensive agreement, which could ensure the conditions conducive to a resumption of dialogue and fully normalized relations between both sides.

We have also been following the latest developments in northern Kosovo with concern, especially in the municipality of Zubin Potok, related to the implementation of a court order by the Kosovo police to search and monitor a number of locations throughout Kosovo in order to combat corruption and organized crime. That led to the arrest of a staff member of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). The Government in Kosovo has declared that the United Nations staff member is now *persona non grata*. We emphasize in that regard the importance of respecting the diplomatic immunity of United Nations personnel in accordance with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. We also emphasize the importance of the neutrality of United Nations mission personnel and their commitment to implementing their mandate.

The European Union-facilitated dialogue in Brussels between Belgrade and Pristina remains the most appropriate framework for settling all outstanding issues between both sides. It is the right way to reach just and lasting consensus solutions. We also welcome the Berlin Summit convened in April by Germany and France with the aim of urging both sides to resume dialogue and implement all existing agreements.

We welcome the recent steps taken by the Kosovo authorities to combat corruption, especially by establishing an anti-fraud unit to promote the effective prosecution of corruption and organized crime. We also welcome the ongoing efforts of UNMIK, in cooperation with the United Nations country team in Kosovo and in partnership with local and international actors, to implement the recommendations of the United Nations Kosovo Trust-Building Forum, held in May 2018 in support of building confidence among the communities. It is important that the international community continue its efforts to urge Pristina and Belgrade to

overcome their differences and reach consensus-based, just and lasting solutions acceptable to both sides, which will help to establish the foundations for peace, security and stability in the region.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to Mr. Tanin to respond to the question raised by the representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Tanin: Before I answer the question, let me thank all those members of the Council who expressed their support for the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo and its staff at this difficult time. I really appreciate it.

Secondly, I would like to express my appreciation for the presence of Under-Secretary-General De Serpa Soares and the decision to request his participation, which is very important from my point of view because it sets out the framework from which our status emanates. It can be very helpful, not in this context but in others, for all the members of the Security Council to look at such issues as immunity and others that he discussed.

In relation to the question posed by the representative of the Russian Federation, let me reiterate that while the fact-finding process is ongoing, we will not comment on the details of an ongoing investigation. That is something I have to respect. However, I would like to assure the representative of the Russian Federation and the other members of the Council that this fact-finding review or internal investigation — whatever one chooses to call it — will be comprehensive and all-encompassing.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The representative of Germany has asked to make a further statement.

Mr. Schulz (Germany): I should just like to comment very briefly on a statement made by our Russian colleague. I want to register the fact that I found his remarks on the European Union, NATO and States that support Kosovo, as well as on the history of the conflict in 1998 and 1999, to be unfortunate, particularly unhelpful and partially insulting. I do not want to descend to that level and will therefore refrain from commenting in detail.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.